

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**I. General Remarks**

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's detailed reply to Applicants' response to the Examiner's previous office action. Applicants traverse the Examiner's rejections but to expedite issuance of the patent have canceled all claims that the Examiner has rejected with the following exception. Applicants have amended claims 6-11 to depend from allowable claim 4.

II. Disposition of Claims

Claims 1, 4, 6-11, 16, 19, 20, 27, 30, 31, 33-35, 38-41, 43, 45-47, 50, 51, 53-56, 58, 81-85 3-16, 18-41, 43-51, and 53-89 are pending in this application. In this Response, all claims except for claims 4 and 6-11 have been canceled. Claims 6-11 have been amended to depend from claim 4.

III. Allowable Claim

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that Claim 4 is allowable over the art of record. Applicants believe that claims 6-11 as amended to be dependent on claim 4 are also now allowable. However, in the event that the Examiner cannot allow the amendments to claims 6-11 at this stage of prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to delete these claims and allow the application to proceed to issue with claim 4, rather than cause the entire application to become abandoned.

IV. Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 50, 51, 53, 54, 58, and 85 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by WO 95/26386. The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 6-9, 16, 19, 20, 27, 30, 31, 33, 38, 40, 41, 43, and 81-84 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Patel (US 2001/0009890 A1).

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. However, since Applicants have deleted or amended these claims for expedited prosecution of this particular application, the Examiner's rejections are believed to be moot. As previously noted, Applicants amended claims 6-9 to depend from allowable claim 4.

Application Serial No. 09/929,465
Art Unit 1712 (Attorney Dkt: HALB:020)

V. Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 10, 11, 23, 38-41, 45-47, 56, 81, 8, and 84 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious from Patel (US 2001/0009890 A1) in view of Mueller (6165946) and Rines H935.

The Examiner has rejected claims 27, 30, 31, 33-35, and 83 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious from Lin (5569642) in view of Mueller (6165946).

The Examiner has rejected claims 50, 54, 55, and 56 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious from WO 95/26386.

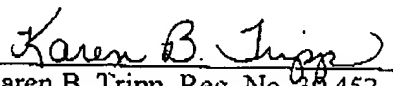
Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. However, since Applicants have deleted or amended these claims for expedited prosecution of this particular application, the Examiner's rejections are believed to be moot. As previously noted, Applicants amended claims 10 and 11 to depend from allowable claim 4.

VI. Summary

Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to allow the application to proceed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 29, 2005


Karen B. Tripp, Reg. No. 30,452
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 1301
Houston, Texas 77251 1301
(713) 658-9323 phone
(713) 658-9410 fax
ktripp@tripplaw.com e-mail

c: Craig W. Roddy, Esq.